533 and is quite impressive when, beginning with one muffled drum, the other drums gradually join in through a long rhythmic sequence, the sound of the orchestra rises to its full force, and then the flutes join at a shrill pitch. The sound of the orchestra then gradually diminishes, one drum after the other falls silent, until finally the muffled beat of the first drum softly fades away. At night, however, the tired European may be driven almost to despair by this drum orchestra. Everyone who has been a guest of Musinga will remember this night music.

We have already discussed the musical aspect of the songs with which instrumental music and dances are accompanied (p. 68). At this point I would like to add something about the content of these songs as taken down by van der Burgt. He states that the lyrics of these songs, sung mostly in unconnected Old Kirundi words (see pp. 124, 148), are not even understood in their original meaning by most of the Barundi themselves. A question about their meaning is usually answered by: "It means nothing, it is only a song." Only those who have been initiated in the esoteric meaning by the learned men, sorcerers and priests, have some understanding of the true meaning of these songs (No. 19, p. 97).

For example, these are the lyrics of a song accompanied by a zither:

● [539]

"Ntiwarima uy' umwaka, ntiwarima.
ninanga usiwite. umugaso utasimbe.
yagese ku' nama. isenge iritschjika."

(Translation: The field is not cultivated this year, i.e., war has been declared. Chief Ninanga stays here. The water ditch does not flow, i.e., the ditch forming the border is dry. It passes close to the homestead. The amulet is broken, i.e., a bad omen for the war.)

In contrast to these old traditional songs, the songs improvised during the dance generally have some connection with current events and are sung in the modern colloquial language. Even these are not coherent songs either but merely short interrupted sentences and thoughts.

796 and arms. Everyone is armed with long-stemmed rattle gourds
794 or iron bells. There is complete silence.
575 Then, with slow steps, Kiranga himself emerges from
[534] the hut. His face is painted with clay so as to be hardly recog-
nizable; his eyes are closed. With both fists he clasps a long
lance, the sacred spear. He is accompanied by four assistants
(ivisjego); one of them is the master of the house, the host of
celebration. Kiranga solemnly takes his seat on the footstool
while the ivisjego squat at his side. At this moment a procession
of ababandwa begins to walk toward him. From the plaited
receptacle mentioned above they take tufts of grass, then kneel
down and place them in front of Kiranga while calling to him:
"Kiranga umwami wi Barundi!" (Kiranga, you are the king of
the Barundi). After returning to their places, they begin shaking
their rattle gourds in a certain rhythm, strictly observing the
beat and at the same time stamping the ground in the same
rhythm. A leader of the choir then begins to sing the old
Kubandwa hymn:

[539] [128] Hai yeye wohima ye!
Abadandwa n'ivisjego!
Hiye yee, he he, eee hiye,
Ruheye ye, Riangombe ye, etc.

Its refrain "Hai yeye wohima ye" is chanted by everybody (which is quite similar to what has been reported by van der Burgt, No. 19, p. 292).

The hymns, the invocations of Kiranga, the maledictions,
796 and all other utterances which are part of the ceremony are not
794 spoken here in the colloquial Kirundi but "in a mangled gibberish
575 which only Kiranga and his subjects can understand." The word
198 insoga (beer) becomes inganda; amata (milk) is changed to anufuro (foam); amukobwa (girl) to amaschenge; kubita (to beat) to kubomagura (to throw mortar at); etc. This special Kirundi terminology is also used by the religious secret societies of the neighboring peoples and appears to consist mainly of elements of Old Kirundi which otherwise has been almost forgotten. (Cf. p. 148).

796 As soon as the men have finished their frenetic singing and
794 dancing, individual participants in the celebration step before
575

197 the language of the Nandi in the Uganda protectorate. The language of the Nandi, of all the languages of East Africa, seems to resemble most closely the pure Hamitic language type since the Nandi probably are the remnants of a former Galla invasion. (A. W. Crabtree, "The Languages of the Uganda Protectorate," Journal of the African Society, January, 1914, pp. 158 ff.)

194 An exact study of the peculiar manner in which the Batussi speak the Bantu idiom, Kirundi, will also yield many intimations and indications in this respect, for it is obvious even to an observant layman that the Batussi differ from the Bahutu in speaking Kirundi. They have a different accent, pronounce certain sounds differently, and combine the syllables differently. In general, it seemed to me that in both Ruanda and in Urundi the Batussi speak Kirundi with a much softer intonation and also that they have a tendency to swallow the vowels of the final syllables. Instead of the 's' or 'ss' pronounced by the Bahutu, they use a very soft 'sch' or 'dsch': instead of Munjahasi they say Munjahasch'; instead of Lanongo, Lanong'; instead of Lubassa, lubasch'. It is also often difficult to say whether the final vowel pronounced is an 'a,' or 'e.' It is also difficult to hear the difference in the pronunciation of 'r,' 'l,' and 'd.'

113 It would serve no purpose to list examples of modern Kirundi at this point since one may consult the comprehensive Dictionnaire Français-Kirundi by Father J. M. van der Burgt and the small Dictionnaire Français-Kirundi et Kirundi-Français by Father F. Ménard which is specifically intended for missionary use (No. 29). Van der Burgt reproduces a few examples of stories, fables, songs, and hymns with an interlinear translation in his Dictionnaire, pp. 96, 292-293, 332-334, 339-342; I myself cannot add anything to them. In conclusion, however, I should

● 539 like to add a few proverbs which are noteworthy for their sharpness of observation and brevity of expression (No. 19, p. 470).

[150] 1) Ivintu vy'ukwibwa viraguma.
Things of no interest (are) hard [to comprehend].

539 2) Kukenura n' ukuvina.
To work is to dance (play).

3) Ischano irasje ujumunsi, irindi risosa hanjuma
Misfortune comes today, something else will come later.

4) Invura irahedsje, isuba risosa.
Rain finished, sun will come.

5) Infisi iravuga, iraschaka kutwara umuntu.
Hyena howls, will carry away man.

6) Aravjutse, ari mubi.
(When) he has risen he is irritable.

133 Then there are in order of size: Mohazi in the Buganza, Mugessera and Sake in the Gissaka, Ruhondo (at an altitude of 1, 750 meters) and Bolero (at 1, 065 meters) in Mulera, and Karago in Lwankeri plain.

In the Bugessera there are several ponds: Murago, Mirayi, Kagomasi, Chohoha, Gaharwa, Kilimbi, etc. The small land of Bgiriri, which is adjacent to Gissaka toward the south, includes Birira /pond/.

The two rivers that wind through Ruanda are: the Nyabarongo /Nyawarongo/ (1) and the Akanyaru (2). The former, to which

[103] 1. Nyabarongo, from the verb kulongora, kulongoroka, "to go far away." This river was called thus because it flows throughout Ruanda.

[103] 2. Akanyaru, from the verb kunyaruka, "to rush." The speed of its flow gave rise to this name.

Mr. Kandt, the last German resident, gave the name of Caput Nili ("Source of the Nile") in a well-known book, is formed by the junction of two rivers, the Mwogo (3) and the Lukarara.

[823] 3. The violence of its flow and the volume of its waters during the rainy season occasion numerous tragic accidents, hence the expression: "Mwogo! Thou doth not kill men, thou only taketh away those who come (of their own accord) to meet death," Mwogo! ntiwich' abantu, wicha abakwizaniye.

• [539]

428 The line of behavior followed by the Banyarwanda when it is
593 time to make a will shows that their social organization, /49/ though far from perfect, is superior to that of many other Negro tribes.

Hamites, Bahutu, and Batwa are anxious to express their last wishes clearly in order to leave nothing unforseen and in order to keep chicanery from creeping in among the heirs.

While alive the father gathers his children around him on a day he selects, or, if he wishes to lend more solemnity to the occasion, he goes with them to the hill chief and offers him a beer as an introductory gift. Among his male children, he appoints the one he likes best as his principal legatee, whether it be the oldest, the youngest, or any one among them.

The chosen son will succeed him in his role as head of the family to levy taxes on his brothers in the name of the king or of the Hamitic chief, and will deal with the latter in matters concerning the small group.

[578] A father may disinherit and curse a son who has given him serious grounds for complaint, who has not shown him due respect, who has insulted him, abandoned him in times of misfortune, or defected during legal proceedings. "May he bear no more children," he exclaims, spitting into one hand and then into the other. "You have behaved badly toward me. I cut you off from my family, I [539] curse you." (1)

1. Ntabyare! Ntaheke! Wambereye gito, nanje ndaguchiye mu bana banje!

As we have already said, the family property is divided into as many lots as there are boys.

The same holds true for the livestock, cows, goats, and sheep. Each son receives an equal share.

The executor of the will, as the eldest son or head of the family, adds a small field or a piece of a banana grove to his patrimonial share.

While his father is still alive, he usually receives a cow, called "obedience cow" (inka y'indabukirano) to confirm his authority

[73] Mokera lakes, the Mweryambéréri, Kinyaga, Buzaa-Mbali, Barwe, etc., henceforth became an integral part of the Crown territories. Like his predecessors, /Ruganzu/ marched on the Ndorwa where he killed a relative of the king, a certain Kanyoni, and then on the Binyabungo to the southwest of Lake Kivu, but those were short-lived conquests.

His successors were no more successful in this regard. The inhabitants of the two afore-mentioned regions never allowed themselves to be assimilated permanently by the Banyarwanda. Ruganzu had no fixed residence; he /81/ spent his entire life waging war, hence his name of "Conqueror" or "Eminently Victorious" (Kaganza).

Only two small principalities are /at this point/ discerned in the present territory of Rwanda, the "Buzaa," a sort of vassal land, and "Marangara," which Ruganzu permitted to survive. The potentate showed a certain respect for their independence in view of the benefits he might derive from them. The petty king of the latter region, who was then Nkoma, had the reputation of being a powerful magician. [53] It is still said today that "Nkoma of Marangara, the son of Nkondogoro, knew how to bewitch a great deal better than it is done today." (Nkoma ya Nkondogoro ibitoni cho mu Marangara kitalogw' uburoa nk'abe noun.)

Ruganzu did not dare undermine his prestige but chose to make him an ally instead. The Hamitic kingdom of Gisaka was not disturbed either. As we have already said, no one knows the exact date when it was founded. It may have originated at the same time as Rwanda.

Only 11 of its kings are known. The first one, Kimenyi I, was a contemporary of Ruganzu II. Relations between the two courts must have been good at certain times since we find that a king of Rwanda, Kigeri II Ndabarasa, married a Gisaka princess, the sister of Kimenyi II Getsia. This harmony came to an end, however, on the day when the Gisaka kings seized the Bugesera and Buzaa-Cheneiga, which, incidentally, they did not retain very long.

The son and successor of Ruganzu, Mutara I Nsoro, enlarged the kingdom to the southeast by driving the Burundi, who occupied part of the Buzaa-Mbali province, beyond the Akanyaru River. Tradition adds that the decisive combat was fought near the Save

644 They were sometimes employed, in preference to other servants, to
701 lead away the convicted high-ranking offenders who were to be exe-
[681] cuted at the usual places of punishment (Buberuka, Bugessera).

I. The name of Impara is used to designate another army corps which is recruited from among the inhabitants of Kinyaga provinces. This name was also given by extension to a group of individuals who are initiates of the Ryangombe secret society and who are compelled thereby to live close to the king in order to draw upon him the favors of the shades of all those who once belonged to that religious society.

They must make an appearance when the king rises, bearing on their heads the tails of hares (amashira y' inkwavu) or of some other carnivore /sic/ like the marten (ibiharangu), which they shake [769] to the right and to the left while singing and dancing. They hold in the hand small bells or sistra (ibinyuguri), which they ring while /389/ invoking in a loud voice the protection of Ryangombe and his companions. Aside from this beseeching role, they fulfill other functions within the king's household.

Owing to their functions as suppliants and intercessors, which is their chief role by far, they might just as correctly have been included in the category that follows.

Duties of a Supposedly Utilitarian Nature, Some of Which Are Private and Others Public and National. Sorcerers and Diviners of All Kinds.

644 A. The Bakoma clan has already been discussed at some
791 length in "History of a Reign," /Book III, not translated/. They were direct descendants of the autochthonous petty kings of Marangara land and were formerly regarded, along with Mashira, as powerful sorcerers. It was believed that they could preserve or take life by hidden means known to them alone.

The first of those autochthonous princes, whose real name was Sekibakanyi, had a tremendous reputation. It is still said today that "Nkoma Sekibakanyi, king of Marangara, (son) of Nkondogoro, knew [539] how to cast spells a great deal better than those things are done today" (Nkoma ya Nkondogoro ikilozi cho mu Marangara kitaloger' ubussa nk' aba none!). This phrase is now proverbial.

[1] [i.e., the Intalindwa. - Ausl.]

754 which is no longer usable (umusâmbi). Then they fetch a human tibia
[826] or fibula (umurundi) with which they carry out a gruesome dance (guchuragura) in the courtyard of the person they wish to harm. They hold in their hand a small jar full of live coals to symbolize the life of their enemy which is soon to burn out. After breaking the clay jar and scattering the coals, they toss a handful of earth taken from a grave upon the owner's hut and say the following words in a low voice,
[539] "I don't want your beans but your life" (Sinshak' ibishyimbo, ichyo ndashaka n'amagara yawe). This is reputed to be one of the worst evil spells.

6. Gutambikir' umutambikiro, that is to say, "to dig a small ditch across" the path where the hated enemy they wish to bewitch will pass. This is another kind of spell by analogy /sympathetic
[826] magic/. In order to do this, the operator must if possible procure a nerve taken from a human cadaver, and a strip of bamboo or some other wood that was used in transporting the dead.

With these he makes a tiny bow which he places in the ditch dug out on the path of his enemy, who is soon to come by. The hole is covered with earth and grass so as not to arouse anyone's suspicion. When the detested person puts his foot on the concealed bow, the spell caster, hidden in the surrounding bushes, pronounces in a low voice the fateful word, Fatwa, "Be caught." This is the end of the unlucky traveler. /403/ Assailed with violent intestinal pains, distended, blown up, he will soon die in terrible agonies, or so claims the theory.

This procedure is also designated under the name of kubang' agaheto or guteg' umuntu agaheto, "to lay the bow trap."

7. Guteger' umuntu inkoko, "to practice the chick spell"
754 (implicitly, one whose guts did not turn white, iteze neza, yabay'
787 urutunda) is regarded along with guchuragura as one of the worst evil spells.

In order to make use of this spell, one usually resorts to specialists in divination who are past masters of this art. If the diviner
[826] agrees to do the job, for a handsome fee, his client prepares to collect secretly (since the Blacks are suspicious and mistrustful of their fellow men) a little saliva expectorated by the person on whom

221 805 [539] Werurgwe, April. This word designates microscopic insects which occasionally prey on sorghum and quickly destroy it. Hence the expression, "Go and see whether the (above-mentioned) insects have attacked (the sorghum)" (Mulebe ngo Werurgwe itayajamo).

Gichurassi. This is the baleful month (ukwezi kubi) during which the annual mourning which lasts 15 days takes place at court. It is also the time of colds and bronchitis, hence the common ex-
[539] pression, "He who lies down with a cold will be carried away (made to die) by the month of June" (Uryamye ibichurane, igichurassi kizamutwara).

Kamena, July. This month is thus called from the word kumena, "to shatter" or "to tear out," because in those provinces of Ruanda where sorghum is cultivated only once a year people harvest the ripe ears in order to crush the grain and make bread (umutsima), which they have not tasted for a long time.

Nyakanga, August, comes from the word gukanga "to frighten." It is called thus because it is often fatal to old cows (amabuguma, ibibuguma), hence the common expression, Nyakanga ikanga amabuguma,
[551] "The month of August frightens old animals," that is to say, causes them to die.

The two terms Gatumba gatoya and Gatumba /427/ kanama formerly served to designate two months, that is, August and September, prior to the creation of the month of Mata, May. Today they indicate the two fortnights in September, thus named from the word gutumba,
[132] "to swell," because the clouds begin to gather in the sky and the rains begin to fall.

As for the month of Mata, it was created at the instigation of the sorcerers under the reign of Lwabugiri.

Mata literally means "milk," and in a figurative sense it means "abundance." It is also the name of a hill at Marangara, where as already mentioned Mutara and his son Lwabugiri established their residence because this area is reputed to bring good fortune to those who inhabit it. It is said that once for several years the rains failed to come and the crops did not ripen. In order to cope with this grave difficulty, it was resolved that henceforth a new month would be added to the year, and that this month would precede the month of

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Then the owners are allowed to carve up the animals on the spot and to distribute the pieces. Words referring to buying and selling must be avoided, however, so as not to offend the lightning whose [422] property rights would thus be violated. The buyers are tacitly bound to compensate the owner. When the time comes for payment, they hand him the price of the meat, rated at its actual value, but without saying anything about it. The seller, if he wishes to induce a recalcitrant buyer to make payment, cannot bring up the subject in explicit terms.

At most he may go to the man's home bearing a native umbrella (issinde) which, owing to its function in times of rain and storms, is supposed to remind the delinquent debtor of the tacit agreement made after one of those storms. It is quite permissible for the debtor to play deaf and blind and refuse to understand. His creditor has no direct hold over him. In order to avoid the evils of lightning with which the seller threatens him in vain with the presence of his umbrella, our recalcitrant buyer need only toss far away the bones of [539] the piece of meat he had chosen and cry, "It was the king of the sky who gave it to me" (n'umwami yangabuliye). These words, pronounced in a loud and intelligible voice, are well understood by the creditor, who can do nothing else.... They clearly convey his dismissal and a definitive refusal.

In certain provinces the owner of a cow struck down by lightning and the people in his house must observe an eight-day mourning [833] period (okwirabura). Cohabitation between spouses is forbidden during that period, just as at the death of a member of the family. The bull, billy goat, and ram are separated from the herds. Cow milk is set aside, and no one may drink of it. When the eight days are over, the animal's master builds a special small /439/ hut on the spot where the animal was killed.

The other cows are milked there, or else the cream gathered [302] on previous days is used and immediately churned. Once the butter is ready, the participants rub it over their bodies while the women and children sing and shout their joy (bakavuz'impundu).

Beer is offered to the guests, and the day ends in the hope that the king of the sky (lightning) will not return to seek new victims.

535 "His high-pitched, excited voice was heard above all the others when the Batwa, their dance over and their arms uplifted toward Musinga, all shouted at the same time, according to custom, one of these traditional phrases, 'I shall go to my death for the king!' 'When I fight, I kill twenty men!' 'I can no longer keep count of those I have defeated!' 'I shed the greatest amount of blood!'"

c. These musicians who are reputed to be the most skillful 533 are retained at court or called there frequently. Their instruments [534] are most primitive. They have a flute (umwironge), the stringed instrument so widespread in equatorial Africa (inanga), and another instrument, more primitive still, the isenge (ocarina type) from which they draw unpleasant sounds. People originally from Usui introduced small drums into the country which they beat with their fingers and which were a great success with the king.

The cithara players are the favorite musicians of the populace. They sing and accompany themselves on their instrument.

The themes of these songs are varied. They deal with the exploits of heroes, the national wars, and even with various /450/ ordinary events of everyday life. The subject is sometimes borrowed from dramas of which the essence and form are common, but they nevertheless draw the attention of listeners because they parallel their own mental attitudes.

We cite here one of those pieces. We heard it recited by a 533 cithara player. He was seated amidst about ten of his companions, 539 who all plucked their stringed instruments together and repeated certain words in chorus at the end of each phrase. The soloist sang, "A leopard left the woods long after sunset.

"He crossed Goko Stream near the village of Murunda (in the Kanage region).

"He came to the Gishwati country in the early evening.

"He came to the hut of the man called 'I am the man who knows how to handle difficulties' (Nziguye).

"The beast knocked at the door with his paw.

"The daughter of the house (recognized and) addressed the animal.

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"Her father said, 'My child, what you have done is bad.

"'Evil will come unto us.'

"The carnivore knocked on the door for the second time.

"He entered the hut and hid near the rush wall (that divides the inside of the hut in two compartments).

"The woman got up to take a brand from the fire.

"The leopard leaped upon her and took her outside.

"With his claws he tore out her entrails (imushing' urwara mu nda, hava mw' umwana).

"The father got up to go to her aid.

"The animal had dragged his quivering prey into the banana grove.

"The husband, after a search, found nothing but a few blood-stained copper bracelets.

"After a period of time the feline returned. /451/

"The master of the house was not caught napping.

"His mind had been active since the accident.

"It was in vain that the leopard brought along Jack Rabbit (the prototype of the resourceful rogue who has a thousand tricks up his sleeve).

"He came near the hut.

"Nziguye ('I know how to handle difficulties') (1) had dug a

1. Nziguye is the substantive of the verb kwizigura, which means "to get out of trouble," "to escape danger through one's own resources."

deep ditch (covered with light branches).

"The leopard vanished into the trap and died there."

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d. Aside from the bards and official chroniclers already mentioned, there are also at court some literary jousters who speak a refined language, who are appointed to the king's side, and who attend to him in shifts.

They are called Abasizi, from the word gusiga, which means "to speak a refined language." They expound the events of the day

538 in an amusing and literary form which is not understood by those who
195 are not in the know.

This is why the opposite of the verb gusîgâ is gusigura, which means "to explain." These men have great verbal facility and are always ready to improvise. The king takes pleasure in those literary jousts, which are not lacking in charm. Their language, which is very rich, lends itself readily to those witticisms which the Abasîzî have built up into a vocation and livelihood. Their recruitment is usually entrusted to a great chief. The present incumbents of this office belong, on the one hand, to the Basinga and aBene Katambi clans, and, on the other hand, to the Bakôbga (Nyaruguru, near the Bisi Mountains).

538 Like the official chroniclers, they remain at the sovereign's disposal, ready to beguile his leisure and to make him enjoy literary pleasures.

539 In order to give an idea of their style and of their talent, /452/ we transcribe here three small pieces of their own making, chosen from among the simplest and easiest.

First Example

Agasîgo ka Rumanur' imbâba.	A small literary piece about that (famine) which caused bits and pieces of hoes to come out (of their hiding places to buy food with them).
Ibyo bitag' imitsima.	What used to be called bread (to wit, the roots of banana trees).
Mitsindo yarabitsinze.	The Victorious (king) has delivered us from it (forever).
Intoke ziraruhutse.	The banana trees may (now) rest.
Ibyo twaryaga.	What we (formerly) ate.
Ngaho wabay' umutsima.	That it has now become (true) bread.
Mitsindo yarabitsinze.	The Victorious (king) has delivered us (from these evils).

539 Tulek' intōke. Let us leave (alone) the banana trees (their roots) (1).

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1. Times of want are unfortunately frequent among the Blacks owing to their lack of foresight. They till the soil only for their own personal consumption. If a crop is ruined by drought or too much rain, therefore, they run out of food. The narrator describes one of those famines and gives it the name of "that which caused bits and pieces of hoes to come out (of hiding)," no matter how worn, to be sold to blacksmiths. One would then attempt to buy food in neighboring provinces with those meager resources.

Reference is made to the roots of banana trees which are dried in the sun after being struck with the handle of a hoe in order to remove the potash. They are then crushed on the grain-grinding stone and furnish an indigestible food which does not satisfy and does not hinder the end, which is death, unless this imitation flour is mixed in with something more substantial.

Second Example

539 Akasigo ko gutur' umwami. A small literary piece (on how to address the king when offering gifts to him).

539 Nd' uwawe, nd' uw' imanzi. I am yours, I am the Hero's (man).
Nkazibgira, Muzima. I speak to him (to this Hero), oh perfect (king)!

Nivugire, nd' uwinganji. Let me rejoice, I am (the man) of the Victorious.

Witwa Ndabagize. You are named (oh king!) the master of their fate. /453/

[45] We may add that in order to observe the rules of euphony, the black men of letters are permitted to use poetic license and deliberately to make errors of syntax, construction, conjugation, etc.

Third Example

Akanganiro k' umubyeyi w' umwana.	Conversation of a mother with her child (to amuse him).
Umugor' atiny' umugabo.	The wife fears her husband.
Umugab' atiny' umwami.	The man fears the king.
Umwam' agatiny' inkuba.	The king fears lightning.
Inkub ' igatiny' umugano.	Lightning fears bamboo (1).

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1. The Banyarwanda, especially those who live in the mountains, have the custom of setting up a long bamboo stem in the court-yard near their hut to protect against lightning. They believe that the latter is caged and harmless when it splits the bamboo.

539 Umwan' atinya nyina. A child fears (respects) his mother.
Umugan' ugatiny' umuliro. Bamboo fears fire (2).

[372] 2. "Bamboo fears fire" because people who live near the forest burn chiefly bamboo.

539 Umurir' ugatiny' amazi. Fire fears water.
Amaz (i)' atiny' ifu. Water fears flour. (3)

3. "Water fears flour," that is to say, the bread or "mush" into which it vanishes.

If' itiny' amenyo. Flour fears teeth (4).

4. "Flour fears the teeth" of those who eat it.

Ameny' atiny' umuhoro. Teeth fear the billhook (iron) (5).

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5. "Teeth fear the billhook," as all other hard bodies, especially when made of iron, like the billhook, which is one of the most useful tools.

538 The Blacks of Ruanda have a rich and varied oral literature. They like witticisms, and since their language is rich in shades and nuances, they manipulate it with great art.

195 The most refined speech is heard at the capital.
644 The habitual frequenters of the court, lords, courtiers, and employees, express themselves in flawless language, use the right words and choice expressions, and give them the proper inflections, for Runyarwanda is a phonetic /sic/ language. The appointed men of letters, storytellers, bards, genealogists, and historians carefully [521] watch their diction. Among them conversation is never /454/ dull, for jokes and witticisms abound.

Considering the good taste that distinguishes the familiars of the king and the inhabitants of the central province of Nduga, it is not

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2. Throughout Ruanda, in principle, a new hut is taken over in the name of a spirit (a dead relative) whose favors are desired.

It is also in his name that one takes a wife (kumulongorer' abazimu).

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[347] This is why these women are called abaterampundu, that is, "those who utter cries of joy."

The duties of the aBatchaba are often identical to those of
726 their brothers, the aBasingo, whom they assist in bewitching the enemy with teratological beings who are driven before the hostile army. Like the aBiru they also make drums.

The totem of the aBagessera is the wagtail, a bird of good
825 omen, which is consequently regarded as a member of the family.
342 Hence the power of the Bagessera to call this bird when needed. At
644 court and throughout the land, there is a custom whereby no one may enter a new hut until the wagtail has made an appearance. The bird must at least flit about or hop on the flattened ground where the hut is to be built or on the hut itself. One may even wait several days if necessary /461/ rather than risk the misfortunes which invariably befall those who do not take this traditional practice into account. At the capital, therefore, theBagessera are in charge of instigating the appearance of "their relative" (mwene wabo), the congenial bird, whenever a royal building is put up.

To achieve this they take some embers from their home and light a fire before the new hut.

They sit nearby and whistle in a special way to catch the attention of their totem.

825 The wagtail is highly regarded by the Banyarwanda. In story and song it is called "the bird (inyamanza) from the region of Mabera," a once famous village inhabited by the Bagessera (1). It is located

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1. The regard in which the wagtail is held is the subject of a charming tale. The wagtail

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gained a choice position among favorite birds because it once performed a very useful deed. A king whose name has been forgotten was pining for love. His courtiers did not know what to do, in spite of their numerous attempts to provide the monarch with a choice companion....

At about the same time, in a village far from the capital, a man and his wife were raising a girl of great beauty, who was nourished on cow milk.... The wagtail, who knew of the king's apathy, came and flitted about the courtyard where the young girl was dressing. The bird seized one of her main garments and flew toward the capital. Surprised, the fair maiden followed the bird, begging it to return her garment. "Do not fear," answered the bird, "I shall return it when we hear the sound of the (capital's) drums." While speaking, the winged messenger dropped some beads, of which he had brought a number. The young girl, who was fond of novelties, bent down and picked them up. Eventually they arrived at court.... At first people were surprised at such a miraculous event, but their attention was

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drawn to the beauty of the fair stranger. The king was notified. She was the girl he had been waiting for. As a reward, the wagtail was granted a permanent privilege to its species called ubulenga nzira, which included immunity and a sort of tithe to be levied upon the crops throughout the realm.

near the hill of Lwoga, not far from Nyanza, the present capital.

563 The Bagessera regard themselves as the most important Muhutu /Bahutu/ clan, and claim to be the most ancient inhabitants of Ruanda. According to them, they were the first masters of the land. /462/

Bloody Bondage Imposed on Some Families

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178 The Bakono, Banyabyinshi, and Bakunzi of the Kinyaga were for a long time the victims of this /type of bondage/.

Let us add, however, that the brutality and cruelty characteristic of those inhuman and now suppressed customs had lost some of their primitive harshness in the course of the last two reigns.

1. The expiatory debt to which the Bakono were bound for having fought Ruganzu II had been changed altogether.

643 Upon the accession of a new king to the throne, the Bakono had to send one or two of their people to the capital, and so did
644 another clan which had formerly belonged to the Banyabyinshi group,
178 so often mentioned at the beginning of the great king's reign.

At court, instead of having their throats slit as was formerly done, those people were merely sprinkled with lustral water (chalk water) and driven for an instant into the hut of the spirits as though being offered in sacrifice to them. There the matter rested. Other chroniclers state that it was customary to beat them a few times with

644 since more than once with his neophyte executioners, who did not
661 fail to congratulate him with some embarrassment while apologizing
696 for the odious task which had been entrusted to them. "Some luck thou had!" they already told him (wagiz' Imana). "What an ugly business the king had entrusted to us!"

"Good for thee, if you managed to get out of such a tight corner." A little later he was even presented to the king, who was first taken aback. He recovered himself quickly and congratulated him in turn. "It was God who saved you (N'Imana yagukijije)," he added. In gratitude to God, Who had rescued him from such a diffi-
[553] cult situation, the lucky fugitive changed his name from Ngirimandwa ("The spirits of the initiates are on my side") to Ngirimana, which means "I have God (on my side)."

After a whole string of circumstances, all equally eventful and dramatic, the outcome had finally turned out in Ngirimandwa's favor.

For one fugitive who was able to narrate in detail the vicissitudes of the drama that nearly killed him, however, how many unfortunate ones vanished into the fatal den without a trace!

Now that the times have changed, elders whose lips were formerly sealed by the rule of secrecy and by the fear of corporal punishment, freely mention the names of unfortunate executed men they knew. They recall among many others a young man who had been a page. /480/ His intelligence, ability, and liveliness had drawn the notice of the sovereign to him, who made him his favorite and could not do without him. As in the previous case the years went by and the prince's favor was transferred elsewhere.

[539] "A king's friendship, a day's friendship," says the proverb.

He had been practically forsaken and was hardly noticed anymore, when one day he was requested to work in the famous "bloody hut."

What had he done that his fate should be so irreparably settled? That is practically unknown.

About eight days after he had received his new job, he was summoned in great haste as though for some pressing errand. It was

233 attain his end. The loss of a cow is regarded in much the same way as that of /a member/ of the family. Numerous are the suicides among Batutsi who do not believe that they can survive royal disfavor or an epidemic that is decimating their herds.

[237] Everything cows yield is highly valued, /504/ their flesh, their hide, their milk, and even their dung, which has many uses.

[291] Every self-respecting woman who can afford it must dress in a cowhide. This skirt is part of the trousseau at the time of marriage and is passed on from mother to daughter until it is worn out. As for 234 milk, it is almost exclusively chiefs' sons' food. The poor regard it as 272 a special dainty and can only covet it from the rich. It is largely taken in curdled form. Fresh milk is not regarded as worthy of men, but as good for children at best.

Prior to the European penetration the Banyarwanda had never thought of boiling it, and native ideas suffered an upheaval when the Whites were observed to cook it before drinking it. The following [524] riddle illustrates the importance and value of milk in the eyes of [539] the natives. Question: "What is the most improper thing, that causes the greatest embarrassment and constraint?" Answer: "A fly drowned in milk or sitting on the king's forehead." The impropriety is the [687] same in both cases. Death would invariably result for a servant who should be so unmindful as to present His Black Majesty with milk stained by an impurity, no matter how slight. The servants in charge of offering ceremoniously to the king the seven or eight small bowls which he must bring successively to his lips are well aware of this .... How many of those unfortunate people formerly paid with their lives for a mere suspicion of impurity! It is true that those Draconian measures were usually motivated by fear of poisoning.

262 Cow meat is a choice morsel and a true dainty, especially for the poor, who taste it only rarely. It is also practically the only meat permitted to women, others being taboo to them. Even cow 237 urine has its daily and current use. /505/

It is used to wash the milk pots and bowls. As for dung, it is put to many uses: to plug up holes and cracks in the wooden kitchen utensils, to coat hut walls in order to ward off the wind and cold, to rub over the body for certain skin ailments, etc.

173 The term gisozi ("big hill") serves, as we have said, to
643 designate the place where a king died.
766 It is the augmentative of the word musozi, which means "hill"
778 and by extension "village." This term belongs to the /word/ class prefixed by the consonant ki.

This class includes nothing but words conveying the idea of majesty, fear, etc. /530/

There are numerous groves in this category, such as those of Kigali, Musumba, Kaganza, etc.

In order to prove the truth of any pronouncement or assertion, the natives use the following phrase which alludes in metaphorical terms to the death of one or another of their sovereigns, Mb' ali jye wakuye
[539] Lwogera i Kaganza!

"Let it be I ('if I do not speak the truth' being implied here) who tore (King) Lwogera away from Kaganza (name of the place where the king died)!"

[644] The reader must have noted that kings and queen mothers alone have been mentioned in the preceding pages. Mere wives were entitled to no special honors after their death. They were buried like common mortals. Queen mothers, that is to say, those who bore the heir to the throne and then reigned with him, were granted the same funerary honors as sovereigns.

173 Aside from the groves we have just described, there is also
644 mention of one at Bugarama-Ntare (i Buhurura) not far from Rukoma.
766 It is believed to be the spot where the undertakers fulfilled their usual
778 functions at the death of a queen named Nyirakigeri. The sacred grove of Butare, which now only includes a few very old trees, is thought to be the place where Nyagihaga, daughter of Ruyenzi and mother of a Chyilima or Mutara died (1).

1. The official chroniclers do provide a genealogical list of the kings of Ruanda, with the name of their mothers and of the clans to which the latter belonged, but this cannot be fully credited. We have

[304] Umugani rwa Ryangombe. To Ryangombe is dedicated the muku or mulinzi, a tree he once climbed to save himself from a buffalo that attacked him on the hunt. The Banyakissaka have the following story about it.

Umugani rwa Ryangombe
Story of Ryangombe

Ngoni Ryangombe lya Babinga, ba Nyundo, ngoni Nyamuniga,
That is Ryangombe the Babinga of Nyundo, who is Nyamuniga,

amafizi nayo awabuguma akapfan nimirindo.
? ? ? ? ?

Ryangombe yaliafite nyina, akanga kumumwira. Ryangombe
Ryangombe has mother refused to obey Ryangombe

ashaka kuja kuhiga mwishamba. Nyina nyiwa Ryangombe:
wants to go hunting on the plain. Mother says[to] Ryangombe:

ati mwana wanje leka kuja kuhiga; ati nalose
so child [of] mine let go hunting; so I dreamed

umugezi, utemba uja luguru; ati uzawambuka, ngenda,
a river, which flows upward; so you cross it, you go,

ntuzagaruka. Ati kandi nalose ulukwavu lutagira ishira,
do not come back. So later I dream a rabbit without tail,

uzalwicha, ntuzalubamba. Ati kandi nalose
you will kill it, without obeying. So later I dream

Nyakisha Chimepenebere au Nyakitindi, ati azakulemutsa,
Nyakisha Chimpenebere or Nyakitindi, so she will greet,

atazakulekula Ryangombe. Ati kandi nalose imbogo
she will not leave Ryangombe. So later I dream a buffalo

539 nyaki gumbu. Ati uzaivumbura. Utuzaikira
black very. So you will raise it. You will not protect yourself,

Ryangombe. Ryangombe, ngo hoshi alagenda, aja kuhiga,
Ryangombe. Ryangombe, who then goes away, goes hunting,

abanza kwambuka umugezi, utemba uja luguru. Abagaragu be
begins to cross river, which flows upward. Followers are

bati. Indagu ya Nyira Ryangombe ilasohoh[illegible]. Bongera
two. The prophecy of mother Ryangombe comes true. They start

kugenda, bavumbura ulukwavu lutagiri ishira, baralwicha,
to go, raise a rabbit without tail, kill it,

baraluleka. Abagaragu be bati. Indagu ya Nyira Ryangombe
leave it. Followers are two. The prophecy of mother [of] Ryangombe

ilageze. Barongeye, barahiga, bavumbura Nyakisha
comes true. They continue, they hunt, they meet Nyakisha

Chimpenebere, kihetse umwana imbebe.
Chimpenebere, she carries a child naked (without a hide).

Baramufata Nyakisha. Ati mutangirira mabi, nimubanze kunshira
They seize Nyakisha. So does nothing bad, begins me to lead to

Ryangombe Barayanye Chimpenebere, ilamukidje Ryangombe.
Ryangombe. They bring Chimpenebere, she bewitched Ryangombe.

Ichara hasi. Ati mpe ingobi yokwihekeka umwana.
He sits on the ground. So give me a hide to carry the child.

Ryangombe icha inzobe. Alaiha au ilamuhati. Ati
Ryangombe kills a marsh buck. He gave him or he gave her. So

iyi ntikwiye, umwana wanje amuhe uluhu rwi
this one does not suffice, child mine it is larger than

539 impongo. Ati iyi ntikwiye umwana,
the antelope. Since this does not suffice for the child,

akokanya, batongera kuhiga. Avumbuka imbogo nyaki gumbu.
it is small, they begin to hunt. He meets a buffalo black very.

Nyakisha Chimpenebere ati: "ndashaka iyo." Ryangombe
Nyakisha Chimpenebere thus: "I want this one." Ryangombe

afata ichumu na ingota, aja kuyitera. Imbogo
seizes spear and sword, goes to throw (to spear). The buffalo

ilahinduka. [305] Imuchumito ihembe. Ryangombe alapfa.
turns around. Gores with horns. Ryangombe dies.

Nyakisha Chimpenebere alishima. Ryangombe agiye kupfa, atuma
Nyakisha Chimpenebere is glad. Ryangombe goes to die, he notifies

yuko apfuye. Babwira umwana we Binego. Alaza
that he will die. They tell child his Binego. He comes

n'impiri ye y'ichuma. Aikubita Nyakisha Chimpenebere.
with scepter of iron. He hits with it Nyakisha Chimpenebere.

Binego alaicha n'umwana wayo ni imbogo nyaki bumbu.
Binego kills with it and child her and the buffalo black very.

Binego amaze kubyicha, abwira abagaragu be, ko aka bamaze.
Binego he ends killing, he says followers his, that he has ended.

Binego achamba Ryangombe. Alataha, asanga nyina
Binego buries Ryangombe. He returns, he visits (his) mother

Nyira Kadjumba. Binego alima mubwani bwa Ryangombe.
Nyira Kadjumba. Binego inherits the kingdom of Ryangombe.

[115] I am indebted to Father Buisson for the translation of this manuscript which was written by a pupil of the mission in Nsasa.